

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

ANNUAL REPORT
GEORGIA COURTS
FY 2014



Published by the Judicial Council of Georgia and the
Administrative Office of the Courts
in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 15-5-24 and by Order of the
Supreme Court of Georgia dated June 12, 1978.
All rights reserved.

Director, Marla S. Moore

Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, SW • Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334

www.georgiacourts.gov

The Judicial Council of Georgia was created in 1945 to develop policies for administering and improving Georgia courts. Judicial Council members and committees meet throughout the year to address specific aspects of court administration and improvement. The Judicial Council is made up of 26 members who represent every class of court: the Chief Justice and the Presiding Justice of the Supreme Court; two judges from the Court of Appeals; the presidents and presidents-elect of the superior, juvenile, state, probate, magistrate, and municipal court councils; and 10 judicial district administrative judges.

The Administrative Office of the Courts was added in 1973 as the staff for the Judicial Council. O.C.G.A. §15-5-24 charges the AOC with providing services related to court administration, compiling data, examining dockets and making recommendations for expediting litigation, acting as fiscal officer for the Judicial Council, and making recommendations for improving court administration and the judicial system. The AOC accomplishes these charges by offering subject-matter expertise on policy, court innovation, legislation, and court administration to all Georgia courts.

The background of the page features a large, faint, circular seal of the Judicial Council of Georgia. The seal contains the text "JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA" at the top and "ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS" at the bottom. In the center, there is an illustration of a classical building with columns and a figure holding a scale, with the word "MODERATION" written on a banner.

table of contents

2	STATE OF THE JUDICIARY
3	STATEMENT FROM JUDICIAL COUNCIL/AOC DIRECTOR
6	JUDICIAL COUNCIL ACTIONS
7	FY 2014 IN REVIEW
8	ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING GEORGIA COURTS
22	GEORGIA COURTS CASELOAD
27	JUDICIAL DIVERSITY
28	JUDICIAL COUNCIL/AOC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
29	JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS & IN MEMORIAM



State of the Judiciary

On Feb. 5, 2014, Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson delivered his first State of the Judiciary Address, focusing on equal access to justice for all Georgians.

“... As Georgia continues to grow in population and diversity, access to justice is a challenge requiring the commitment and hard work of us all. Georgia’s judicial system is sound, and it is strong - for those who can afford a lawyer. But to safeguard its future, we must guarantee access to justice for all people, as our laws were not made for just a few. Too many Georgians cannot afford legal representation, and too many go without civil legal services. Today, nearly 2 million Georgians - or about 19 percent of our population - live below the poverty line.

In addition to poor people, those who do not speak English are entitled to justice as well... To prepare for the future, Georgia’s courts need an army of trained, certified interpreters. Nationally, almost 21 percent of our population speaks a language at home other than English. In Georgia, the Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that more than a half million people do not speak English or they speak only limited English. Providing interpreters is an ongoing challenge in courts across the state.

Access to justice also means giving those who break the law the sentence they deserve. It means not automatically sending some people to prison when their true crime is being addicted to drugs, or failing to take medication for their schizophrenia, or not paying child support because they’ve lost their job. Those of you who have been in the legislature for the last three years have built a legacy in criminal justice reform.

One of the crowning achievements is the specialty courts - what some call ‘accountability courts.’ ... Here’s how Superior Court Judge Samuel Ozburn of the Alcovy Judicial Circuit put it to me: ‘We are seeing lives marked by incarceration and disappointment transformed into lives with promise, hope and stability.’ ... As your Chief Justice, I personally thank you for your support of these courts and your partnership with us in helping to fulfill our Constitutional mandates. ...”

Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Supreme Court of Georgia

Chair, Judicial Council of Georgia

Director's Statement



On behalf of the Judicial Council and the Administrative Office of the Courts, I am pleased to present the 41st Annual Report on the work of Georgia's courts. We began FY 2014 celebrating 40 years of accomplishments by the AOC. At the same time, we embraced the future of Georgia's judiciary by adopting a strategic plan for the Judicial Council/AOC and instituting an ongoing process for its implementation.

The strategic plan sets forth our guiding principles:

- Upholding the independence and integrity of the judiciary;
- Promoting the efficient and effective administration of justice;
- Supporting informed, fact-based decisions that affect the judiciary; and
- Collaborating with key stakeholders in the judicial, executive and legislative branches.

This report has been structured to highlight the strategic plan and how the Judicial Council/AOC is working toward the plan's strategic objectives.

The annual report is always too short to highlight the daily contributions of our judges and other court professionals who deliver the fair and efficient administration of justice across our state. Each plays a vital role in court administration, and each has a story to tell about their commitment to improving the justice system. For a more in-depth look at Georgia's judiciary, please visit <http://w2.georgiacourts.gov/journal> to view our Georgia Courts Journal.

Marla S. Moore

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marla S. Moore".

Director

Judicial Council /Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Council of Georgia



Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson
Chair, Judicial Council
Supreme Court

Presiding Justice P. Harris Hines
Vice Chair, Judicial Council
Supreme Court

Chief Judge Herbert E. Phipps
Court of Appeals

Presiding Judge Sara Doyle
Court of Appeals

Judge Louisa Abbot
Council of Superior Court Judges

Judge Mary Staley
Council of Superior Court Judges

Judge Linda S. Cowen
Council of State Court Judges

Judge Charles Wynne
Council of State Court Judges

Judge Robin W. Shearer
Council of Juvenile Court Judges

Judge J. Lane Bearden
Council of Juvenile Court Judges

Judge Kelley Powell
Council of Probate Court Judges

Judge Chase Daughtrey
Council of Probate Court Judges

Judge Betsey Kidwell
Council of Magistrate Court Judges

Judge W. Allen Wigington
Council of Magistrate Court Judges

Judge James Anderson
Council of Municipal Court Judges

Judge E.R. Lanier
Council of Municipal Court Judges

District Administrative Judges

Judge John E. Morse, Jr.
First District

Judge Harry Jay Altman II
Second District

Judge Edward D. Lukemire
Third District

Judge Gregory A. Adams
Third District

Judge Gail Tusan
Fifth District

Judge Arch W. McGarity
Sixth District

Judge James G. Bodiford
Seventh District

Judge Kathy Palmer
Eighth District

Judge Kathlene Gosselin
Ninth District

Judge J. Carlisle Overstreet
Tenth District

Judicial Council of Georgia

Administrative Office of the Courts

The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee met five times during FY 2014 to address implementation of the Judicial Council/AOC's strategic plan and to monitor its objectives and initiatives. Chaired by Presiding Judge Sara Doyle, the Committee is composed of a representative from each trial court council and the senior managers of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Mission

The Judicial Council and AOC lead collaboration on policy across Georgia's courts to improve the administration of justice in Georgia

Vision

To improve justice in all Georgia courts through collaboration, innovation and information

Guiding Principles

- Uphold the independence and integrity of the judiciary
- Promote efficient and effective administration of justice
- Support informed, fact-based decisions that affect the courts
- Collaborate with key stakeholders in judicial, executive, and legislative branches

Strategic Objectives

- Improve citizen experience with Georgia courts
- Improve collaboration and planning
- Build thought leadership

Priority Initiatives

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Establish a baseline evaluation of current customer experience with Georgia courts, focusing on Access and Fairness measures | 4. Implement new approaches to engage the Judicial Council in preparation for legislative sessions | 7. Define research priorities and schedule for FY 2014, FY 2015, and FY 2016 |
| 2. Encourage Georgia Courts to assess performance and develop improvement plans | 5. Develop and implement new two-way communication strategies for Judicial Council/AOC to engage with judges | 8. Create open repository of information for all classes of court |
| 3. Implement ongoing strategic planning by the Judicial Council and AOC | 6. Solicit input and develop recommendations for Judicial Council bylaws, committee structure, and leadership continuity | 9. Identify and share innovations and best practices |



Judicial Council Actions

As the policy-making body for the state's judiciary, the Judicial Council considers new judgeships, budgetary and legislative matters, and judicial branch programs and policies. Chaired by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the 26 members of the Judicial Council represent all of Georgia's appellate and trial courts. The Council also oversees the work of the Administrative Office of the Courts, which staffs the Council and its committees.

The Judicial Council met three times during FY 2014 and took the following actions:

- Approved recommendations for additional judges in the Coweta and Waycross judicial circuits
- Approved operational standards and transfer rules and forms for Adult DUI/Drug Courts
- Approved treatment standards for Adult DUI/Drug Court and Juvenile Drug Court
- Approved prioritized budget enhancement requests for AFY 2014 and FY 2015
- Adopted a strategic plan and formed the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee
- Approved training curricula for the Magistrate Courts Training Council and the Municipal Courts Training Council
- Approved five nominations to the Board of Court Reporting
- Approved the Court Reporting Policies and Fee Schedule, and released the document for a two-month public comment period
- Adopted Electronic Court Filing standard for all E-filing cases in Georgia
- Supported legislation to improve the annual process of creating the state's master jury list
- Voted to support legislative initiatives for the 2014 General Assembly
- Assisted representatives of the Department of Audits and Accounts with a special examination of the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts and trial court councils to ensure state funds are used efficiently.

Budget Requests

Amended FY 2014 Prioritized Enhancement Request	Amount Requested	Amount Funded
1. Institute of Continuing Judicial Education	20,580	20,580
2. Accountability Courts	19,702	--
3. E-Filing	52,000	--
4. County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council	16,580	16,580
5. Council of Probate Court Judges	27,840	--
6. Council of State Court Judges Retirement	120,272	105,631
7. Rent Increase Administrative Office of the Courts	6,384	6,384
Total	263,358	149,175

FY 2015 Prioritized Enhancement Request	Amount Requested	Amount Funded
1. Institute of Continuing Judicial Education	39,182	--
2. Accountability Courts	78,806	78,806
3. E-Filing	208,000	--
4. Family Law Information Center	61,019	--
5. County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council	66,320	66,320
6. Civil Legal Services to Victims of Domestic Violence	772,502	386,251
7. Council of Probate Court Judges	111,363	--
8. Council of State Court Judges Retirement	410,508	395,867
9. Rent Increase Administrative Office of the Courts	6,329	6,329
Total	1,754,029	933,573



FY 2014 In Review

Chief Justice Hugh P. Thompson was sworn in on August 15, 2013, becoming the Chair of the Judicial Council of Georgia. Justice P. Harris Hines was also sworn in as Presiding Justice. In his first State of the Judiciary address, the Chief Justice spoke to the concerns of Georgia's judges who see first-hand what issues affect those using the court system. FY 2014 was spent examining how courts operate and how to make the judicial system more efficient, accessible, and accountable to those who use it.

During the 2014 Legislative Session, \$103,502,661 was appropriated for the Judicial Branch for FY 2014. ICJE received an enhancement for infrastructure. Reductions came at the expense of an accountability court certification program officer and \$150,000 from the Judicial Council budget. The Amended FY 2014 budget included additional funds for the ICJE and operating funds for the County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council (CMPAC). Adjustments were made to include an increase in rent paid to the Georgia Building Authority and an increase to the Judicial Retirement System for the Council of State Court Judges.

Appropriations for FY 2015 were passed that included three key enhancement requests:

1. The certification program officer for Accountability Courts, unfunded in FY2014, was funded;
2. CMPAC received funding for an additional full-time compliance monitor; and
3. The Judicial Council received \$386,251 in additional funding for grants to provide civil legal services to victims of domestic violence. Two additional superior court judgeships were approved and funded for the Coweta and Waycross judicial circuits, following recommendations from the Judicial Council. The two new judgeships will become effective January 1, 2015. An additional state court judgeship was created in Lowndes County, effective July 1, 2014.

Budget

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	% Change FY 2009-FY 2014
SUPREME COURT	\$8,837,974	\$8,026,295	\$7,726,631	\$8,625,575	\$9,093,297	\$9,093,297	\$10,248,025	14%
COURT OF APPEALS	14,744,435	13,452,235	12,531,853	13,357,490	14,106,000	14,106,000	15,035,519	2%
SUPERIOR COURTS	63,622,100	60,499,072	57,314,930	58,770,012	61,105,042	61,105,042	64,909,147	2%
JUVENILE COURTS	6,691,660	6,578,771	6,765,382	6,718,350	6,774,461	6,774,461	7,029,264	5%
JUDICIAL COUNCIL	16,345,321	14,173,198	13,448,850	13,468,577	12,423,861	12,423,861	13,461,113	-21%
JUDICIAL BRANCH / COURTS TOTAL	110,241,490	102,729,571	97,787,646	100,940,004	103,502,661	103,502,661	110,683,068	0%
STATE FUNDS	\$21,180,140,103	\$18,569,866,489	\$17,890,512,513	\$18,299,477,557	\$19,342,059,819	\$19,920,261,481	\$20,836,744,620	-2%
% OF STATE FUNDS	0.52%	0.55%	0.55%	0.55%	0.54%	0.52%	0.53%	
% OF STATE FUNDS CHANGE		0.03%	-0.01%	0.01%	-0.02%	-0.02%	0.01%	

Activities Supporting Georgia Courts

The Judicial Council/AOC provides subject-matter expertise on policy, court innovation, legislation, and court administration to all classes of courts. The agency also furnishes a full range of information technology, budget, and financial services to the judicial branch. Director Marla Moore serves in many capacities both locally and nationally, bringing together resources and expertise to strengthen services provided to Georgia courts.

Georgia hosted the mid-year meeting of the Conference of Chief Justices, bringing together Chief Justices from around the nation and its territories, and the National Association for Court Management (NACM) mid-year meeting.

Director Moore represents the interests of the Judicial Council and courts on several state bodies including: Institute of Continuing Judicial Education (ICJE) as a Trustee; Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; Georgia Commission on Family Violence; and the Governor's Office of Highway Safety Older Drivers' Task Force and Young Adults Drivers' Task Force. Nationally, she serves on the NACM Ethics Committee and several working committees of the Conference of State Court Administrators, including: Court Management (Vice-Chair); Access, Fairness and Public Trust and Confidence; and the Language Access Advisory Committee. She presented at the NACM Conference on human trafficking and its impact on state courts.

Office of Communication and Outreach: The Office of Communication and Outreach responded to media requests from national, state, and local media during FY 2014. The *Basic Rules of Court Conduct* brochure was revised to reflect the increase of technology use in the courtroom, adoption of the Judicial Council policy regarding head coverings, and special accommodations for those with language access issues or disabilities. "Your Guide to the Georgia Courts" brochure and the "Welcome to the Georgia Court System" poster educate citizens on the organization and structure of Georgia courts. They were updated to reflect changes to the juvenile code and the increase in judges. A video demonstrating the Georgia Judicial Exchange was

published with Clarke County Superior Court, and will help all Georgia courts as they adopt this technology.

Office of General Counsel: The Office of General Counsel provided legal services and research to the AOC and courts during FY 2014. More than 144 contracts were drafted and grants totaling 2.1 million dollars for nonprofits that provide civil legal services to victims of domestic violence were monitored and managed. Assistance was given to judges, commissions, councils, and boards for filing the conflict of interest affidavit required by the Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission. Daily inquiries from the public, inmates, attorneys and judicial branch employees were answered. Legal guidance was provided for implementation of HB 1000, setoff debt collection against state income tax refunds for debts owed to Georgia courts.

Fiscal Support: The Financial Administration Division processed 7,117 transactions for 21 judicial agencies. A total of 98 programs were maintained over FY 2014, including 36 state, 13 federal, and 49 other funded programs.

IT Support: The Information Technology Division provided technology projects and support services during FY 2014 to Georgia courts as follows:

Technology Provided	# of Courts	Other Metrics
Georgia Judicial Exchange	103	35,093 New Child Support Filings
Georgia State Patrol Electronic Citation Web Service	239	321,263 citations electronically imported from GSP
Magistrate Court Information System	32	utilized by 13 additional law enforcement agencies
Probate Court Information Systems	18	
Traffic Information Processing System	89	
Sustain	59	utilized by 38 other judicial entities

Committee on Justice for Children

Since 1995, the Supreme Court's Committee on Justice for Children (J4C) has worked to improve court processes involving civil child abuse and neglect cases. The committee and staff utilize several grants, including the Federal Court Improvement Program, Casey Family Programs, and Quality Improvement Center (QIC) for Child Representation to fund their activities.

The Federal Court Improvement Program has provided the Georgia judicial system with more than \$6 million over 20 years. Under Chair P. Harris Hines, the grant has provided: an automated data exchange between the judicial branch and the executive branch of child specific data and associated court orders; educational experiences for attorneys and juvenile court judges; the publishing of child welfare outcomes on a public website (fostercourtimprovement.org); more than 100 local child welfare data summits and multiple educational summits; and the certification of 41 attorneys as child welfare law specialists. During FY 2014, 12 summits were held and 25 attorneys were certified.

As part of the Casey funded Cold Case Project, an expert team uses a statistical predictive model to identify children who are stuck in foster care. The team reviews files and conducts meetings with local staff and foster children to ensure every legal avenue for permanently placing the children has been explored. Outcome measures show a 25 percent greater success rate for legal permanency compared to children receiving no special attention. During FY 2014, 200 cases were reviewed.

The QIC is concluding a four-year study to identify the preferred approach to representation in dependency cases. More than 100 Georgia attorneys have participated in this study, and a report is due in the fall of 2015.

Georgia Child Support Project

The Georgia Child Support Project is a collaborative of the Judicial Council/AOC and the Department of Human Services, Division of Child Support Services. Its primary duty is to staff the Georgia Commission on Child Support.

The Commission is engaged in several projects to improve citizen experience with Georgia courts, improve collaboration and planning, and build thought leadership.

Initiatives for FY 2014

- *Develop tools for self-represented litigants.*
Two online training tools were added to the Commission website to assist the public in completing child support worksheets and navigate the Income Deduction Order process. The child support calculators were updated as a result of substantive changes to O.C.G.A. §19-6-15 during the 2014 legislative session. Development continues for a new web-based child support calculator to enhance and eventually replace current technology.
- *Continue work with the Division of Child Support Services.*
Projects include training, support to the agency's e-filing project, and assistance with private income deduction orders.
- *Support the DCSS Parental Accountability Courts.*
A database developed by the Judicial Council/AOC will support efforts to obtain grants and state funding for the Parental Accountability Courts.
- *Work with stakeholders on overlapping issues.*
Staff trained domestic violence advocates on assisting DV victims in obtaining child support. Staff also received training to teach youth about what it truly means to become a parent.
- *Provide training.*
Staff conducted 14 training sessions for attorneys and DCSS agency staff.

Accountability Courts Certification and Peer Review

Felony drug courts and mental health courts must be certified every two years and peer reviewed every three years to receive state grant funding. Program monitoring began in October 2013, and continues at two-year intervals or as needed, depending on each program's success with meeting the Judicial Council Standards for Georgia Accountability Courts. At the end of FY 2014, 39 felony drug courts and 21 mental health courts had obtained initial certification. Two mental health courts remained in the implementation and planning phase and were provided waivers from standards.

The accountability court certification process involves the development, distribution, completion and analysis of applications for certification. Judicial Council staff and Accountability Court Committee members complete

this process twice each year. They also serve as peer reviewers and provide follow up review and onsite technical assistance to applicants using materials and processes designed and approved by the Judicial Council. Ten drug court teams have been trained to conduct peer reviews, and three drug court peer reviews were completed in FY 2014. The results have been positive, with court staff reporting that they enjoy working together to analyze operations and make improvements that will benefit their participants.

Mental health court peer reviews will begin in FY 2015. The ongoing certification and peer review processes will involve more and more programs as counties and circuits initiate them and the accountability court system matures.

Actions taken July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014

- Adopted DUI/Drug Court Operational Standards, DUI/Drug Court Treatment Standards, DUI/Drug Transfer Standards and Form, and Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Standards
- Supported Veterans Treatment Court enabling legislation (SB 320)
- Revised the Judicial Council/AOC reporting form for FY 2015 to support the implementation of performance measures and expanded data element collection

“The leadership of Governor Deal, funding from the state legislature, and the hard work of the Judicial Council set Georgia apart as the top state for accountability courts. In 10 years, I expect Georgia will continue to be the leader in accountability courts, with up-to-date standards and best practices, a model peer review and evaluation program, and a commitment to continuing innovative and effective practices.”

Judge Charles E. Auslander III
Athens-Clarke County State Court
DUI/Drug Court

Governmental and Trial Court Liaison

In its second year with an enhanced policy staffing model, the Governmental and Trial Court Liaison team focused on increasing its support of trial court councils and collaborating with other judicial branch stakeholders.

The Judicial Council's legislative calendar was accelerated by a full three months to allow sufficient time for researching issues, developing policy, communicating legislative goals to other stakeholders, and securing sponsors for legislation. Another change included the return of a Judicial Council reception for lawyer-legislators, which was held in the rotunda of the Judicial Building.

A notable success was passage of HB 1000, authorizing implementation of a state income tax refund intercept program to satisfy unpaid court fines and fees. The team worked closely with the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal

Association, as well as trial court representatives, to secure the bill's adoption. Pilot projects are expected to start in early FY 2015.

Other court related legislation included a new code section in the Georgia Civil Practice Act that requires redaction of personally identifiable information in civil filings, a bill that allows local courts to increase the filing fee that supports Alternative Dispute Resolution programs, and a bill that authorizes Veterans' Court Divisions in addition to felony drug and mental health court programs.

Liaison staff provide full administrative support to two trial court councils, several training councils, and councils of court clerks. Each year, the trial courts make progress with legislation that improves their efficiency and promotes justice throughout our state.

"The work of the Judicial Council of Georgia is critical to the excellence of the administration of justice in our state. Currently, the members of the Judicial Council's Workload Assessment Committee and the Accountability Court Committee are dedicated to these areas of critical need. Past accomplishments of significance are the establishment of the ten Judicial Administrative Districts and the establishment of the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education."

Judge Mary Staley
Cobb Judicial Circuit
Superior Court
President, Council of
Superior Court Judges



"The Judicial Council offers every class of court the opportunity to come together on a regular basis to debate policy, budgeting, and other matters important to the Judicial Branch of Georgia, as well as the citizens we serve. At every Judicial Council meeting, the judges present are representative of our diverse state. They serve every corner of it, urban, suburban and rural; all with the goal of ensuring the judicial branch operates with objectivity, diligence, and justice in mind."

Judge L. Chase Daughtrey
Cook County Probate Court
President, Council of Probate
Court Judges



In June 2014, I traveled to Williamsburg, Virginia, to take part in the Residential Phase of the National Center for State Courts' Institute for Court Management Fellows Program. It was an intense three weeks that proved to be one of the most incredible experiences of my professional career. A comprehensive curriculum was taught by some of the most prominent leaders in court administration. The theme "Leadership and Management in the Courts and Justice System" was drilled into our very being.

During this particular phase of the 2015 Fellows Program, students were exposed to a wide array of court services, knowledge, skills, abilities, and strategies encountered in the typical day of a court administrator. The real life scenarios and enactments allowed participants to draw on learned decision-making skills and past experiences, as well as newly introduced principles and best practices imparted by the faculty. At the program's conclusion, each candidate will be required to complete a court project that relates to their court or agency. The findings from my court research project will be delivered in May 2015 during the Master Class in Alexandria, Virginia.

The knowledge I gained about court administration through this program was as valuable as the practical experience I have accumulated working 15 years in the courts. Another great benefit of this program is that I forged new relationships with 22 future ICM Fellows, additional resources that I can call on when faced with unique experiences in my daily line of work! If you are ever afforded the opportunity to be a part of this esteemed group - *Carpe diem!*

Stephanie C. Hines
Judicial Council
Administrative Office of the Courts
Human Resources Manager & EEO
Officer

ICM Partnership

In January 2013, the Judicial Council/AOC partnered with the Institute for Court Management, the education and training arm of the National Center for State Courts, to bring the Certified Court Manager (CCM) program to Georgia. A nationally recognized program, the CCM is the first of two certifications in ICM's Court Management Program. A group of 40 participants completed the first course in the series, *Court Performance Standards: CourTools*.

Following the initial course offering, two more courses were offered in FY 2014: *Fundamental Issues of Caseload Management* and *Managing Court Financial Resources*. Within the next fiscal year, 30 court professionals will have satisfied all requirements to become Certified Court Managers.

Court Performance Standards: *CourTools*

CourTools is the set of 10 performance measures developed by the National Center for State Courts to gauge and enhance a court's performance, efficiency, output, and operations. *CourTools* provides an excellent tool for judicial leadership and court improvement. Through a partnership with the Institute for Court Management, the Judicial Council/AOC hosted training for 40 court professionals in January 2013, during which six court professionals were certified as faculty.

The faculty administered a statewide interest survey and developed a training plan to bring awareness of *CourTools* measures to judges and court personnel around the state. To increase interest in and knowledge of *CourTools*, a short introduction was presented to leadership of the various court councils. These briefings were followed by 11 primer sessions for judges, clerks, and court administrative groups. Sessions included examples of implementation and demonstration of selected measures. Finally, the full two-and-a-half day course was planned for November 2014.

Information Technology & The Georgia Judicial Exchange

Superior courts in 103 counties electronically file child support orders through the Georgia Judicial Exchange (GAJE) administered by the AOC. The AOC began developing GAJE in 2004 in response to the Georgia Division of Child Support Services' request (DCSS) for an e-filing system that could be used by its local offices. Pilot sites in Washington and Bibb counties initiated use of GAJE in 2008.

During FY 2014, Columbia County Superior Court signed on as the 100th court to use GAJE. The implementation of e-filing has dramatically shortened the amount of time it takes for a DCSS office to file court pleadings, reduced the number of staff necessary to file a pleading, and improved service to citizens.

In May 2014, the Integrated Justice Information Systems (IJIS) Institute awarded the Judicial Council/AOC Springboard certification on information sharing aimed at the transmission of legal documents among court system participants. The Judicial Council/AOC is the second organization to conduct conformance testing under this program, which ensures the implementation of relevant portions of the OASIS LegalXML Electronic Court Filing (ECF) Version 4.01 Standard.

These products and systems enable the safe and effective sharing of legal documents between court system participants. Certification of these products reduces interoperability barriers that often arise when partners seek to exchange data without the benefit of prior third-party certification. In June, the Judicial Council adopted ECF Standards for all e-filing cases in Georgia.

Number of Child Support Offices 54	Child Support Office E-filing 44	Pending 2	Remaining 2
Number of Counties in Georgia 159	Superior Court E-filing 103	Pending 7	Remaining 49



Columbia County Superior Court Clerk's Office with Jorge Basto

“The Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts is honored to have been involved in the IJIS Institute's Springboard program and we believe it will greatly enhance information sharing initiatives in the justice community. Our organization has been leading the charge in the implementation of court standards since 2005. Being the first in the justice domain to acquire Springboard certification shows our continued commitment to endorsing the Electronic Court Filing Standard that promotes interoperability amongst systems. We intend to certify all Major Design Elements in this specification and validate the concept of integration through coordinated business processes and technology.”

Jorge Basto,
Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts

Georgia Courts Registrar

The Judicial Council/AOC annually licenses and credentials nearly 5,000 court officials and professionals. To unify eight separate licensing processes, improve customer service, and furnish web-based information access, the Georgia Courts Registrar was launched in January 2014. The Registrar serves as a hub where individuals and firms submit new and annual certification and licensing qualifications, and administrative staff process applications and easily communicate with customers. It also provides a central application for court officials and professionals to create profile information, submit and track information, upload documents, and pay license fees.

This online, cloud-based system has streamlined operations and has resulted in a 50 percent decrease in personnel costs related to certification and licensing within FY 2014, the first year of use. The reorganized staffing model prioritizes efficient application processing and excellent customer service. The first professional group to use the Registrar reported a 20 percent increase in customer service satisfaction. All customers requiring licensing or certification will be using the Registrar by the spring of 2015.

Office of Certification and Licensing

Member Group	Description of Services	#
County & Municipal Probation Advisory Council	Misdemeanor Probation Employee Data Maintained	1,488
	Renewal of Misdemeanor Probation Provider Registration	88
Board of Court Reporting	Learning Essentials About Professionalism (LEAP) Seminar/Training: # of attendees	37
	Renewal of Annual Registration Court Reporting Firms	118
	Renewal of Certification Court Reporters	1,044
Commission on Interpreters	Renewal of Court Interpreter Licensure	165
Commission on Dispute Resolution	Renewal of Certification of Neutrals	2674
Georgia Commission on Family Violence	Family Violence Intervention Program Participants	5108
	Renewal of Family Violence Intervention Program (biennial cycle)	54
Georgia Certified Process Server Program	Process Server Certification Exams Administered	93
Total Services Rendered		10,865

The County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council

The County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council (CMPAC) regulates and registers the state's private and governmental misdemeanor probation providers. Duties include registering providers, collecting quarterly reports, promulgating and enforcing rules, and establishing requirements for initial training and continuing education for providers.

Registration of 86 misdemeanor probation entities was renewed during FY 2014, including 53 governmental programs and 33 private companies. These entities employ 843 registered and approved probation officers and 497 support staff.

Monitoring and enforcement are performed through complaint investigations and compliance reviews. Despite limited resources, CMPAC conducted 28 compliance reviews and 17 follow-up reviews. Compliance reviews consist of staff traveling to provider offices to review case files and employee files and conduct interviews with program directors. CMPAC staff identified the following prevalent deficiencies in misdemeanor probation operations:

- Gaps in case documentation
- Lack of case management oversight
- Inaccurate or inconsistent quarterly reports
- Extending cases beyond the original term of probation, in conflict with the determinate sentencing requirements of O.C.G.A. §17-10-1
- Failure to obtain or properly document training
- Failure to maintain employee files with all required documents.

In response, CMPAC began the process of updating existing rules and regulations. Sanctions imposed included the revocation of registration for one private and one governmental probation provider.

Additionally, CMPAC assisted with the review of misdemeanor probation operations by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts. After the Department released its performance audit report, CMPAC began working with the executive branch in its efforts to systematically improve misdemeanor probation operations throughout Georgia.

Commission on Interpreters

To ensure equal access to justice for people with limited English proficiency and for deaf and hearing-impaired people, courtroom interpreters must be specially trained as court support professionals. The Commission on Interpreters credentials court interpreters in a variety of languages, and sets policies and procedures for court interpretation.

Georgia has 165 licensed court interpreters who are certified, conditionally approved, or registered in 13 spoken languages.

Language	# of Interpreters
Amharic	1
Chinese	6
French	1
German	1
Haitian Creole	3
Japanese	1
Korean	1
Persian/Farsi	1
Polish	2
Portuguese	7
Serbo-Croatian	4
Spanish	136
Vietnamese	1
Total	165

Board of Court Reporting

The production of the official court record is an essential process to court users' access to and fairness in Georgia courts. Regulation of the practice of court reporting upholds the administration of justice.

Over the course of FY 2014, the Judicial Council's Committee on Court Reporting Matters engaged the Board of Court Reporting in a comprehensive process to provide recommendations on the following court reporting policies and fees:

- Application of the fee schedule for individuals serving as independent contractors
- Format and style for electronic transcripts, to include electronic signatures authenticating digital transcripts
- Compensation for court reporting services and uniform billing practices
- Certification standards for digital monitors
- Certification standards for realtime reporting with recommended dates for realtime capability in superior and state courts.

Complainant	FY 2014
Inmate	13
Public	5
Attorney	3
Court Reporter	2
Board of Court Reporting	0
Total	23

Respondent	FY 2014
Official Court Reporter	18
Freelance Court Reporter	2
Court Reporting Firm	3
Total	23

Reason Complaint was Filed	FY 2014
Obtaining Copy of Transcript	9
Accuracy of Transcript	9
Fees/Billing Disputes	3
Contracting	1
Gifting	1
Total	23

Final Board Actions	FY 2014
Majority Vote Dismissal	19
Final Order	0
Voluntary Dismissal	0
Pending	2
Automatic Dismissal	2
Consent Order	0
Total	23

Court Reporters Sanctions	
Suspended (Failure to Renew by April 1st)	79
Suspended (Failure to Meet CE Requirement)	43
Revoked	21

Court Reporting Firm Sanctions	
Inactive (Failure to Renew by April 1st)	11

Remote Interpreting Pilot Project

In 2012, the Judicial Council/AOC undertook a remote interpreting pilot project to address a shortage of qualified foreign-language interpreters in rural and suburban Georgia courts. The goal of the pilot was to assess whether remote interpreting could be a viable, lower-cost alternative to live, on-site interpreting for Limited English Proficient court users in non-metropolitan Georgia. The project duration spanned from October 2012 - June 2014, in Sumter County superior court, Richmond County superior and state courts, and Polk County juvenile and magistrate courts and the public defender's office. Certified Spanish interpreters used a combination of video, phone, wireless, and internet technologies to interpret 26 non-jury trial events from the Judicial Council/AOC's Atlanta office.

The project's main findings included:

- A sophisticated, remote interpreting system like the one used in the pilot project has the same quality as in-person interpreting
- The cost of an audio/visual system that maintains the service level of in-person interpreting is very high for courts that do not regularly serve LEP court users
- Court staff training and consistent use are necessary to maintain familiarity and deter errors with a remote interpreting system
- Courts may need to analyze and change procedures to identify the need for an interpreter prior to court proceedings.

The report recommends:

- Courts and the Judicial Council/AOC should track the number of court users that require language interpretation, which will provide a better picture of the need for interpreters
- Courts should examine process improvements that will ensure earlier notice of a need for interpreter services
- Rural courts should explore emerging, simplified technical solutions that allow for on-demand certified interpreters
- Courts using remote interpreting technology should undergo regular training and practice sessions to maintain familiarity with the technology
- The Commission on Interpreters should encourage the training and certification of foreign-language interpreters in rural areas.

Council of Language Access Coordinators Conference

Georgia was among 39 states and one U.S. territory represented at the second annual Council of Language Access Coordinators Conference, held in Portland, Oregon. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) sponsored the conference to bring together state court professionals dedicated to creating barrier-free access to justice for individuals with limited English proficiency.

The conference demonstrated that the way a state's judiciary is structured - particularly whether the court system was non-unified or unified - creates unique challenges in meeting U.S. Department of Justice mandates for improving court access by people not fluent in English. Conference themes included the need for more interpreters and for interpreters in uncommon languages and the growing use of remote interpreting. Phone and videoconferencing are possible technological solutions for states that have a gap in interpreting resources.

Conference highlights included addresses by retired Chief Justice Paul DeMuniz of the Oregon Supreme Court, current Oregon Chief Justice Thomas A. Balmer, NCSC President Mary McQueen, and the staff of the NCSC Language Access Services Section. Seminars covered a diverse array of interpretation subjects, including educating judges and court staff, funding expansion of interpretive services, and strategies for leveraging and managing stakeholders.

Commission on Dispute Resolution

The Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution administratively supports the Commission on Dispute Resolution in its oversight of local, court-connected programs offering alternatives to traditional litigation. Mediation, non-binding arbitration, and case evaluation give litigants less expensive choices for resolving their differences compared to going to trial. They also help conserve scarce court resources for adversarial cases.

During FY 2014, the legislature passed HB 438, which raised the allowable cap on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) civil filing fees to \$10 from \$7.50. The filing fee is collected, managed and disbursed locally to support court-connected ADR programs. The increase will allow local court programs to decide whether to increase their filing fee above \$7.50 to meet budgetary shortfalls and the demand for ADR services.

In May 2012, the Commission on Dispute Resolution recognized the unique skills required to mediate juvenile court cases by creating two new registration categories. Mediators with prior juvenile mediation training or experience were permitted to grandfather into the categories through November 2013, without further training. There are now 107 mediators registered to handle delinquency cases and 51 mediators registered to handle dependency cases.

Five complaints were received during FY 2014 and were dismissed for failure to assert rule violations, lack of jurisdiction, or because of immediate compliance by the respondent. In the same time period six registration or renewal issues concerning the applicant's disciplinary record were reviewed. Five of the six were allowed to register. The sixth was initially denied and appealed the denial to the full Commission, but the Commission upheld the denial. The applicant then reapplied some months later and was approved after satisfaction of the conditions the Committee on Ethics had imposed.

The 2013 ADR Institute attracted 217 attendees, including those who watched live remote broadcasts of the conference in Tifton and Savannah. An additional 15 people attended a video replay of the conference at Mercer Law School in March. Ansley B. Barton, the founding director of the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution and a former law clerk to Chief Justice Harold G. Clarke, received the inaugural Clarke Award for significant contributions to ADR in Georgia.

Georgia Commission on Family Violence

Data Collaborative Project: The Georgia Commission on Family Violence began gathering and analyzing quantitative data to help clarify the scope and distribution of family violence and related crimes against persons across Georgia.

The data analysis work began by partnering with the Georgia Crime Information Center and the Statistical Analysis Center at the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to plot a seven-year history of violence incidents and violent crime reporting along with census data and a range of supplemental data. Collaborating partners like the Judicial Council/AOC, Division of Family and Children Services, Department of Public Health, and the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence will supply data on superior court family violence caseloads, orders of protection, child abuse reports, adult protection reports, domestic violence services demand, and public health data.

One objective is a commitment to monitoring the trends, patterns, and prevalence of family violence among Georgia's counties - and sharing that information with planning partners to strengthen their work.

Training

GCFV staff conducted law enforcement trainings in 13 counties, reaching 474 participants. Training was also provided on HB 911 (Strangulation as Aggravated Assault) to approximately 450 participants in 17 counties.

Pre and post-test scores indicate these trainings resulted in an increase in knowledge retention regarding local domestic violence programs.

Question	Pre	Post	Change
Name of Advocate	46%	87%	41%
Number to DV program	26%	83%	57%
Primary means dominant	72%	96%	24%
Required arrest if both used violence*	34%	16%	-18%

*demonstrates a greater understanding of Georgia law.

Task Forces

During FY 2014, GCFV supported the redevelopment of four task forces in the Alapaha, Coweta, Northern, and Waycross circuits, and met with individuals from the Cordele Judicial Circuit to assist with redeveloping its family violence task force.

Staff provided technical assistance, strategic planning, and training to task forces in thirteen circuits:

Circuits and counties that received training and task force services	
Alapaha Circuit	Gwinnett County
Appalachian Judicial Circuit	Habersham County
Athens-Clarke County	Hall County
Atlanta Judicial Circuit	Henry County
Bartow County	Houston County
Bibb County	Lanier County
Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit	Lumpkin County
Bulloch County	Macon Judicial Circuit
Cherokee County	Muscogee County
Clayton County	Northeastern Judicial Circuit
Coweta Circuit	Paulding Judicial Circuit
DeKalb County	Rockdale County
Dublin Judicial Circuit	Rome County
Eastern County	Stephens County
Elbert County	Tift County
Enotah Judicial Circuit	Towns County
Flint Judicial Circuit	Treutlen County
Forsyth County	Union County
Fulton County	Waycross Circuit
Glynn County	

2013 Annual Conference

The theme of the 19th annual statewide Family Violence Conference was “Justice Across Generations: Framing a Commitment to End Family Violence.” Held in early September, the conference brought together 330 attendees from across the state to hear local experts in the fields of domestic violence, law enforcement and disability services.

A special highlight was the Voices of Hope Choir from Lee Arrendale State Prison for Women, under the direction of Chaplain Susan F. Bishop.



Georgia’s 10th Domestic Violence Fatality Review

This year, the Georgia Commission on Family Violence and the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence issued the state’s tenth annual Domestic Violence Fatality Review Report. The Report analyzes 10 years of data, from nearly 100 domestic violence fatality reviews, and provides recommendations to lower homicide rates in Georgia. The report’s 10 key findings hold tremendous potential to significantly impact the lives of domestic violence victims. Each finding is accompanied by case examples and recommendations for change.

The Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project has recorded the deaths of more than 1,300 Georgians attributed to domestic violence in the past 11 years. In 2013, there were 118 domestic violence homicides in the state. Georgia holds the unfortunate distinction of ranking ninth in the nation for men killing women in single-victim homicides. Most of these homicides are domestic violence murders, according to the Violence Policy Center.

GCFV, along with the Verizon Foundation and Hopeline Project, awarded mini-grants to 14 Family Violence Task Forces to implement HB 911 and the Domestic Violence Fatality Review recommendations. Those Family Violence Task Forces that received mini-grants were:

Mini-grant Recipients	
Athens-Clarke County	Fulton County
Camden County	Griffin Judicial Circuit
Cherokee County	Houston County
Cobb County	Lowndes County
Conasauga Judicial Circuit	Muscogee County
Coweta County	Paulding County
DeKalb County	Savannah-Chatham County
Enotah Judicial Circuit	Troup County
Forsyth County	Waycross Judicial Circuit

Access the report online at www.gcfv.org

Next Generation Courts Commission

In 2012, the State Bar of Georgia partnered with the judicial branch to form the Next Generation Courts Commission. The Commission's goal is to consider what Georgia's court system could be like in 20 years. For two years, the Commission and its committees have studied the following areas: education and outreach; program improvements; technology; business process improvements; and court funding. In April 2014, the Commission published its final report, *Embracing the Courts of the Future*, which sets forth broad recommendations in these areas. The Commission will continue to develop proposed action items based on the report's recommendations. The report can be viewed at http://www.gabar.org/upload/NGCC_finalreport.pdf.

Magistrate Courts Free Forms Generator

In FY 2014, the Council of Magistrate Court Judges debuted its Magistrate Courts Free Forms Generator. The forms generator is an interactive, online questionnaire that guides users in properly completing court forms, including complaints, answers and dispossessory forms. Once complete, the forms can be filed in any county's magistrate court, and the forms are e-filing compatible.

"A few years ago, the Council made improving access to Georgia's magistrate courts a priority, especially for self-represented litigants," said Sharon Reiss, executive director of the Georgia Council of Magistrate Court Judges. "We wanted to develop a free service that would make our forms not only easier to fill out, but also more complete, so that judges have all the information about a case right from the beginning. We are proud to be the first courts in the country to offer such a service."

The Forms Generator can be found on the Council's website at www.gamagcouncil.org.

Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative

Funded by the State Justice Institute, the Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative seeks to increase awareness and understanding about the prevalence of human trafficking in the courts nationwide. The Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative is made up of the Center for Public Policy Studies, the Center for Court Innovation, the National Judicial College, Legal Momentum, the National Association of Women Judges and the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Georgia was selected to participate as one of three pilot sites in the Collaborative's assessment of the scope of human trafficking-related challenges and development of resources and capacity to address them.

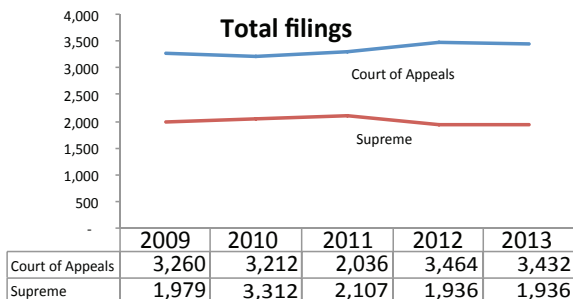
The Judicial Council/AOC supported the Collaborative by staffing its meetings, providing relevant materials and expertise related to Georgia's human trafficking statutes, and explaining the existing needs of the state's courts. Court teams met three times during FY 2014 to determine priorities, review existing resources available for trafficking victims, and formulate training curricula for judicial training seminars.

SUPPORTING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES THROUGH RESEARCH, PLANNING AND DATA ANALYSIS

Several areas of the Judicial Council/AOC's strategic plan impacted the Office of Research, Planning and Data Analysis (Research) this year. FY 2014 focused on the baseline assessment of court access and fairness, increasing data collection quality, and performance measurement. And, as it has since 1976, Research collected and analyzed data from more than one thousand courts in Georgia.

APPELLATE COURT CASELOAD

Total Filing Trend by Appellate Court for Docket Years 2009 - 2013



Appellate case numbers have fluctuated slightly in the past five years, with no change between any periods greater than 10 percent. Following national trends, the Supreme Court caseload decreased a little over 8 percent since a peak in 2011. Nationally, caseload in courts of last resort have been declining since 2006. Although most of the nation's intermediate appellate courts have seen no caseload change since 2006, the Georgia Court of Appeals caseload has increased consistently since 2009, growing 7 percent over five years. Specific definitions of case types and additional caseload data are available at www.georgiacourts.gov.

INCREASING DATA COLLECTION QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

The Chief Justice charged the Judicial Council's Judicial Workload Assessment Committee with improving court data quality to ensure its usefulness in performance measurement. Refining and adding data elements to caseload reporting supports individual courts' abilities to evaluate performance in areas of clearance rates, time to disposition, and age of active pending caseload. The data initiative has increased data standardization and should increase the number of courts reporting reliable caseload data.

EXAMINING THE WORK OF GEORGIA COURTS

Since 1976, Research has worked with local officials to measure activity in Georgia courts. The ongoing efforts produce statistics for all of Georgia's appellate and trial courts. Georgia law requires the Judicial Council/AOC to "compile statistical and financial and other information on the judicial work of the courts and on the work of other offices related to and serving the courts." O.C.G.A. §15-5-24 (3). The Judicial Council/AOC serves as the state archive of court caseload information. The collected data is used to support state and county resource decisions, recommendations for new judgeships, and policy development.

The data shown in the following charts and tables represents an improved way of reviewing and analyzing Georgia's court data. In this effort, many of the traditional reporting mechanisms have been removed. New graphs and tables reflecting a broader perspective are being included in this year's report. The capturing of data across case types from all classes of courts, portioning of data by limited and general jurisdictions, and proportional class of court reporting provide a new outlook on court caseloads in Georgia.

TRIAL COURT CASELOAD

Chart 1 represents the percentage of total filings by class of court for CY 2013. Georgia's limited jurisdiction courts handled 90 percent of all cases in the state. The municipal and magistrate courts account for 62 percent of Georgia court filings. The large majority of their work is comprised of traffic offenses for municipal courts, and arrest warrants (felony and misdemeanor), small claims, and dispossessory cases for magistrate courts. These four case types represent more than 1.7 million cases annually.

The remaining 38 percent of cases are handled by the remaining four courts, with state and probate courts handling the next largest percentage of cases. The vast majority of over half a million state and probate cases are traffic related. The superior courts hear 10 percent of the state's cases, and their work is divided between civil and domestic cases (60%) and criminal cases (40%). Juvenile courts hear the fewest number of cases, and their work is dominated by delinquency and deprivation matters.

Table 1 shows the distribution of more than 3 million incoming cases by court jurisdiction and case type. Ninety percent of Georgia's cases are within limited jurisdiction courts, and over half (54%) are traffic related. Criminal and civil filings together make up the remaining 46 percent of limited jurisdiction caseload. Juvenile cases represent less than 3 percent of the limited jurisdiction courts' workload.

The bulk of Georgia's superior court workload arises from domestic relations and criminal cases. Due to concurrent jurisdiction, civil cases are most often initiated in state and magistrate courts, which moderates civil filings in superior court.

Overall, traffic cases dominate, representing 49 percent of all incoming cases. Criminal cases make up another 24 percent, and civil cases account for 19 percent of filings. Though domestic relations cases are 43 percent of the superior court docket, these cases account for only a little over 4 percent of the state's total incoming caseload.

Chart 1: Percentage of Total Filings by Class of Court, CY 2013

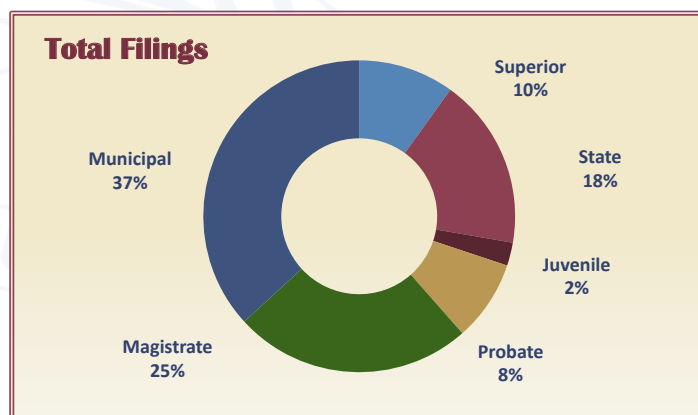


Table 1: Percentage of Total Filings by Class of Court, CY 2013

Case Type	Jurisdiction		
	Limited	General	Total
Traffic	1,843,942	-	1,843,942
Criminal	760,681	152,671	913,352
Civil	732,839	60,944	793,783
Domestic Relations	-	164,942	164,942
Juvenile	91,317	-	91,317
Total Incoming	3,428,779	378,557	3,807,336
Percent of Total	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%

Chart 2: Total Filing Trends CY 2009 - CY 2013

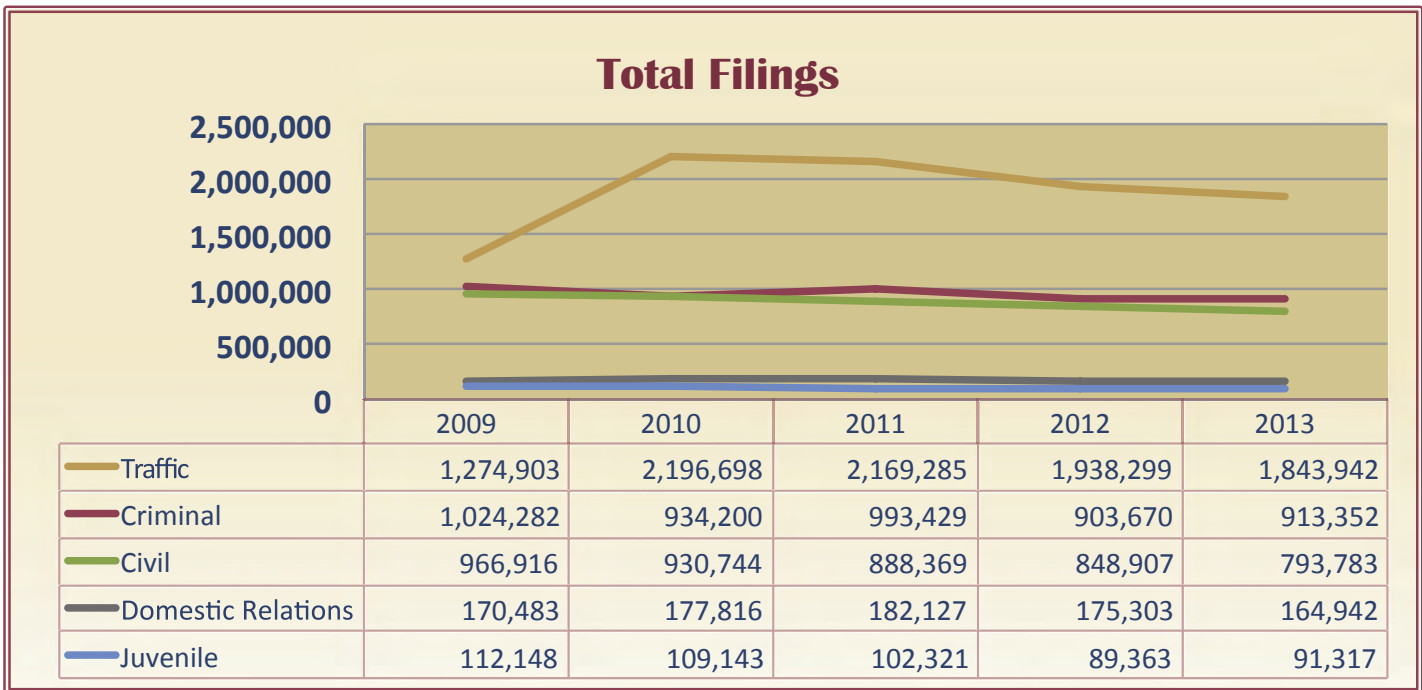


Chart 2 above shows incoming caseload over the last five years by case type. More than 1.8 million traffic cases comprise the majority of all filings. While there appears to be a significant increase from 2009 to 2010, the difference can be attributed to an increase in the actual number of municipal courts submitting caseload reports.

In line with national trends, criminal and civil caseloads decreased over the five-year period. However, the complexity of and judge time invested in managing and resolving cases has increased. Self-represented and limited English proficiency participants impact court resources across all classes of courts. Use of court interpreters and litigant assistance in completing forms and following court business processes are challenges that many courts face. To better understand these and other challenges and potential solutions, courts are being asked to capture additional data starting with CY 2014.

Domestic relations caseload has remained relatively stable over the past five years, showing a modest decrease of 3 percent after peaking in 2011. Nationally, courts saw a decrease from the 2011 peak.

Juvenile caseload has decreased over 18 percent since 2009, mirroring national trends. Scarce budget and law enforcement resources along with increased data-driven and evidence-based programming likely play a role. A recent rewrite of Georgia's juvenile code is expected to impact future caseload of these courts.

Table 2 One way to compare caseload across the many circuits in Georgia is to utilize a measure of total cases filed divided by the number of judges in each circuit. The judge count is totaled across all class of courts, and the number of cases reflects total filings reported within the circuit boundary by all classes of courts. The resulting total cases filed per judge is then ranked from highest to lowest. Table 2 shows total case filings and rankings. In CY 2013, the circuit with the highest number of cases per judge was the Clayton Circuit with 5,817 cases for each of their 30 judges. The circuit with the smallest number of cases per judge was Toombs Circuit at 607 cases per judge.

Table 2: Total Circuit Filings per Judge, CY 2013

Circuit	Total Judges	Total Filed	Total Filed per Judge	Rank
Alapaha	29	30,532	1,053	40
Alcovy	21	49,644	2,364	21
Appalachian	22	22,663	1,030	41
Atlanta	99	554,432	5,600	2
Atlantic	48	80,338	1,674	30
Augusta	43	163,133	3,794	7
Bell-Forsyth	13	34,088	2,622	16
Blue Ridge	22	53,407	2,428	19
Brunswick	47	107,086	2,278	24
Chattahoochee	31	43,792	1,413	34
Cherokee	26	58,904	2,266	25
Clayton	30	174,522	5,817	1
Cobb	66	284,007	4,303	5
Conasauga	22	45,605	2,073	27
Cordele	21	28,664	1,365	35
Coweta	50	126,712	2,534	18
Dougherty	11	51,640	4,695	4
Douglas	14	48,555	3,468	8
Dublin	19	37,964	1,998	28
Eastern	32	132,119	4,129	6
Enotah	21	21,381	1,018	42
Flint	25	80,865	3,235	12
Griffin	34	78,864	2,320	22
Gwinnett	67	321,825	4,803	3
Houston	20	34,000	1,700	29
Lookout	37	44,871	1,213	36
Macon	24	75,435	3,143	13
Middle	39	36,424	934	45
Mountain	25	27,164	1,087	38
Northeastern	21	69,432	3,306	9
Northern	32	30,667	958	44
Ocmulgee	53	57,818	1,091	37
Oconee	29	17,956	619	48
Ogeechee	28	45,445	1,623	31
Pataula	32	21,680	678	47
Paulding	10	32,830	3,283	11
Piedmont	24	55,061	2,294	23
Rockdale	10	30,795	3,080	14
Rome	13	42,694	3,284	10
South Georgia	31	33,090	1,067	39
Southern	37	96,663	2,613	17
Southwestern	37	32,348	874	46
Stone Mountain	67	187,355	2,796	15
Tallapoosa	17	27,254	1,603	32
Tifton	26	61,636	2,371	20
Toombs	24	14,569	607	49
Towaliga	20	28,842	1,442	33
Waycross	42	41,930	998	43
Western	14	30,635	2,188	26
Statewide	1,525	3,807,336	2,497	

Table 3 shows the percentage of total circuit filings within each class of court. Population demographics can have an impact on the overall circuit caseload. A heavy probate caseload may indicate an aging population. State, magistrate, and probate court caseload levels may have an inverse relationship to municipal courts. Where municipal judges hear traffic cases, traffic filings in other courts are likely lessened.

Table 3: Percentage of Total Circuit Filings by Class of Court, CY 2013

Circuit	Superior	State	Juvenile	Probate	Magistrate	Municipal	Total
Alapaha	12	0	1	35	15	37	30,532
Alcovy	19	0	6	20	35	20	49,644
Appalachian	17	0	3	21	32	27	22,663
Atlanta	5	11	1	3	24	56	554,432
Atlantic	6	49	1	2	12	30	80,338
Augusta	7	20	2	8	17	46	163,133
Bell-Forsyth	13	40	2	20	21	4	34,088
Blue Ridge	10	27	3	4	25	31	53,407
Brunswick	7	17	2	8	21	46	107,086
Chattahoochee	26	21	12	20	9	11	43,792
Cherokee	17	0	4	23	32	24	58,904
Clayton	5	35	2	2	26	31	174,522
Cobb	8	32	2	2	25	31	284,007
Conasauga	13	0	4	29	29	24	45,605
Cordele	14	0	3	41	26	15	28,664
Coweta	11	26	3	4	23	34	126,712
Dougherty	7	17	3	3	32	38	51,640
Douglas	14	35	3	2	32	15	48,555
Dublin	11	11	2	33	20	22	37,964
Eastern	7	6	2	6	15	64	132,119
Enotah	22	0	4	29	31	15	21,381
Flint	7	41	3	3	21	26	80,865
Griffin	11	15	4	6	27	38	78,864
Gwinnett	6	8	2	2	28	54	321,825
Houston	20	37	0	4	0	39	34,000
Lookout	22	5	2	21	27	23	44,871
Macon	11	10	4	6	29	40	75,435
Middle	12	24	2	2	29	30	36,424
Mountain	12	20	3	7	24	34	27,164
Northeastern	11	29	2	5	22	30	69,432
Northern	16	4	2	34	34	10	30,667
Ocmulgee	15	17	2	18	26	22	57,818
Oconee	21	0	1	28	28	21	17,956
Ogeechee	11	30	2	3	24	31	45,445
Pataula	14	8	3	26	19	30	21,680
Paulding	22	0	4	31	26	18	32,830
Piedmont	15	8	2	15	27	34	55,061
Rockdale	10	34	3	3	33	18	30,795
Rome	16	0	4	25	16	39	42,694
South Georgia	11	28	2	5	15	40	33,090
Southern	10	32	1	3	25	29	96,663
Southwestern	12	8	2	24	13	40	32,348
Stone Mountain	13	11	4	7	41	25	187,355
Tallapoosa	18	0	3	23	33	23	27,254
Tifton	4	40	1	2	13	39	61,636
Toombs	19	0	2	43	19	17	14,569
Towaliga	14	0	4	55	14	13	28,842
Waycross	13	17	2	5	33	30	41,930
Western	20	17	5	3	52	3	30,635
Statewide	10	18	2	8	25	37	3,807,336

Judicial Diversity

Total Judges	White	Non-White
Male	910	94
	61.4%	6.3%
Female	374	96
	25.2%	6.5%

State Level Non-White	Number of Judges	Percent of Judges
African American	24	10.6%
Asian Pacific Islander	1	0.4%
Hispanic American	0	0.0%
Native American	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%

Limited Jurisdiction Non-White	Number of Judges	Percent of Judges
State	14	1.1%
Juvenile	20	1.6%
Magistrate	83	6.6%
Probate	10	0.8%
Municipal	28	2.2%

Currently the American Bar Association (ABA) calculates and tracks diversity within the judiciary at a state level. To allow for comparisons, Georgia demographics were counted using the same definitions. This minimizes confusion and creates one set of data. The ABA defines state level non-white judges as those in general jurisdiction trial courts, appellate level and courts of last resort. Therefore, Superior Court, Court of Appeals and Supreme Court judges are reflected in this count. All remaining judges are included in the limited jurisdiction table. Only non-white judge data is compiled, in conformance with the ABA standard for data collection.

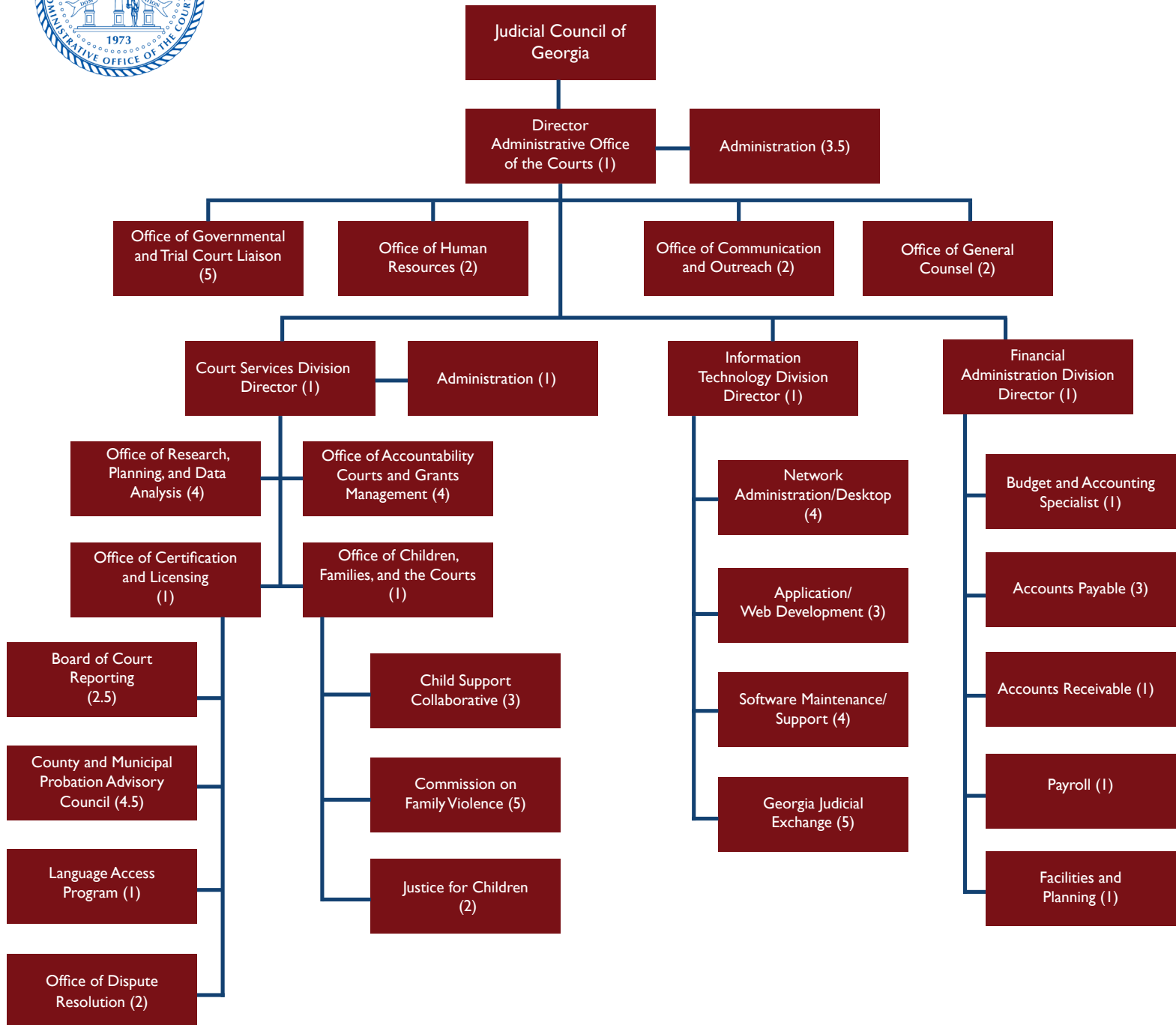
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Male	933	948	1,023	1,003
Female	444	456	452	474
Total - Self Reported	1,377	1,404	1,475	1,477
African American	149	152	171	175
Asian Pacific Islander	4	5	4	5
Hispanic American	-	-	-	-
Native American	3	4	3	3
Other	1	6	6	6

For a broader picture of Georgia, the self-reported demographics were counted and the findings are reflected above.

Notes

1. Data are accurate as of the date retrieved and may not match previous or future publications due to additional reports and/or corrections to previous reporting.
2. Only courts that self-reported data are included in these figures. This report likely under estimates Georgia's total caseload. Reporting levels vary by class of court, but on average, 92 percent of all courts report their data.
3. All judge data were reported from the FY 2013 Court Information Directory published by the Administrative Office of the Courts. All population figures are from the United States Census Bureau. Specific definitions of case types and additional caseload data are available at www.georgiacourts.gov.

JUDICIAL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS *Organizational Structure*



Appointments

Superior Courts - Appointed

Judge J. Ronald Mullins
Judge Maureen Gottfried
Judge C. Michael Johnson
Judge Suzanne Smith
Judge Verda Colvin
Judge Randy Rich

01/07/14
01/07/14
01/14/14
04/16/14
04/16/14
05/27/14

Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit
Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit
Oconee Judicial Circuit
Cherokee Judicial Circuit
Macon Judicial Circuit
Gwinnett Judicial Circuit

State Courts - Appointed

Judge Jeffrey Hanson
Judge Eric Richardson
Judge Ben Richardson

07/31/13
08/14/13
01/07/14

Bibb County
Fulton County
Muscogee County

Remembrance

Judge Daniel Camp 7/9/13
Coweta Judicial Circuit Juvenile Court

Retired Judge Joseph E. Cheeley 10/11/13
Gwinnett County State Court

Judge Clarence Miller 2/15/14
Worth County State Court

Judge David L. "Trey" Aspinwall, III 7/30/13
Liberty County Magistrate Court

Retired Judge Charles L. Carnes 10/15/13
Fulton County State Court

Judge Ronald Newton 4/13/14
Fannin County Magistrate Court

Senior Judge Charles Brewer 8/20/13
Emanuel County Magistrate Court

Retired Judge Charles B. Mikell, Jr. 11/4/13
Court of Appeals

Judge Gene Lowery 4/16/14
Catoosa County Probate Court

Senior Judge HW Lott 8/26/13
Alapaha Judicial Circuit Superior Courts

Judge John Paul Jones 12/31/13
Bartow County Magistrate Court

Senior Judge James W. Head 6/9/14
Eastern Circuit Superior Courts

Judge A. Ronald Cook 8/29/13
Griffin Judicial Circuit Juvenile Court

Judge Cedric Thomas Leslie 1/25/14
Bibb County Magistrate Court

Senior Judge R. Hopkins "Hop" Kidd 6/20/14
DeKalb County Magistrate Court

Senior Judge John W. Sognier 9/6/13
Court of Appeals

Judge Jerry Daniel 1/30/14
Burke County State Court

Retired Judge George Fryhofer 6/25/14
Burke County State Court

